eHealth Technical Working Group
January 6, 2010 11:00AM-12:30PM

Please refer to the meeting slides for additional information.

Meeting Summaries:
In the interest of better coordination with the Technical Advisory Committee and other committees, it has been suggested that meeting summaries of both the TAC and TWG be published on the public CHHS eHealth website. Group members will be given an opportunity to review meeting summaries for accuracy before they are made publicly available. There were no concerns or objections raised in response to this.

Discussion of Working Group Process Issues:
In response to recent email discussions, the group was asked whether members felt that there was a need for more formal structure. In response, several points were raised:
- There appeared to be some confusion about what TWG is being asked to accomplish.
- Clearer documentation would be helpful to communicate what the group is being asked to agree upon or review, as well as what the group has agreed upon or approved.
- There was some desire for formal governance structures and processes by certain members of the group; however, this was offset by concerns by others in the group that anything other than consensus-based decision making would be impractical given project timelines.
- Appointing of co-chairs to help organize and move the design process forward could be desirable.
- Elucidation of starting assumptions and design principles would help ensure that everyone in the group is on the same page.

Walter explained that because time constraints prevented a design approach where all issues and possibilities could be explored and discussed in advance, the staff has been working to quickly develop a straw man architecture based on input from the group that TWG and TAC could then review and refine. By necessity, the process being followed has been more akin to "rapid application development" as opposed to the "waterfall model" of development.

CHHS Guidance on TWG Design Work:
Jonah was then asked whether he could provide some guidance to help clarify the overarching goal that the technical architecture is to support. In response, Jonah made the following points:
- The overarching design principle for the technical architecture is to support meaningful use, rather than to support HIE for its own sake. Meaningful use should drive TWG's short- and medium-term principles and deliverables.

- The architecture should strive to constitute a "thin layer" of essential services while fully leveraging pre-existing technical capabilities within the state.
- The architecture should fully support the existing infrastructure/capabilities of HIOs, IDNs, IPAs, hospitals, practices, and community clinics, while also meeting the obligation of providing HIE services where there currently are none so that all California providers can achieve meaningful use.
- The intent of the architecture is not to compete with HIOs. HIOs are recognized as a critical service provider and organizational entity that must be supported. This support, however, must not come at the expense of all other stakeholders.
- Choices will need to be made with respect to how best to appropriate the $38.8 million of federal funding for this work. Services may include those that can be leveraged across HIOs and/or within areas where HIOs do not exist.
- In addition, a process must be supported whereby the governance entity, extension centers, and HIOs come together in a unified fashion to specify to the vendor community what services are needed, what standards will be followed, and what mechanisms will be used to provide information. As long as vendors comply with these requirements, it should be up to the individual provider what services to purchase and from whom.

Walter affirmed that these were the principles and assumptions under which he had been working. While many of these principles had been articulated when the group reviewed the Technical Committee Charter and the Funding Opportunity Announcement of the HIE Cooperative Agreement Program, Walter acknowledged that it was nevertheless a challenge to make sure that everyone was on the same page given the short timeframe

Dave Minch and Dave Handren also agreed with the points that Jonah had made, stating that they were on the same page with their assumptions.

Process Improvements:
In summarizing the feedback on governance provided by the group, Jonah proposed that:
- Staff focus on completing a draft of the straw man technical architecture as soon as possible (within the next week)
- A roadmap of the design process be created
- Co-chairs be selected
- The consensus decision-making process used by the group be articulated

There was general agreement from members of the group around this proposal. Dave Minch and Rim Cothren volunteered to work on the roadmap. It was agreed that candidates for co-chairs would be identified from the active participants in the group.

Discussion then moved on to a review of requirements and principles which have been guiding the initial design of the technical architecture but perhaps had not been made explicit to the group.

Technical Architecture Design Requirements (Slide 4):

Walter described several requirements that previously had been implicit. (Please refer to the list of requirements in the meeting slides.) The following requirements prompted significant discussion points and/or suggestions.

- *Facilitation of HIE transactions needed for meaningful use per the NPRM*
  - *Help communicants to identify each others' addresses and each others' supported communications mechanisms for electronic communications.*
    - A discussion ensued around the term "communicant" and whether "provider" would be a more meaningful term. The point was made that "communicant" was not easily understood, and could be construed to mean all 30 million individuals in California. On the other hand, the term "provider" does not encapsulate all of the parties that would be involved in HIE communications, including laboratories, payers, pharmacies, public health agencies, etc. It was decided that additional clarification around the most appropriate term is needed.
  - *Help communicants to authenticate each other and to make access control decisions based on the counter-party's identity attributes*
    - A suggestion was made to make the statement "Create a system for 'universal trust' in electronic communications…" a sub-requirement of "Help communicants to authenticate each other…", and to further edit this point to emphasize that the technical system for trust would need to work in conjunction with a DURSA (Data Use and Reciprocal Support Agreement).
    - An additional sub-requirement was added to reflect the necessity of communicating the need for creating a DURSA to other work groups.
  - *Promote the use of data standards in electronic communications to achieve maximum necessary and widely-supportable degree of structured data exchange for HIE transactions needed for meaningful use*
    - Participants suggested that the use of standards be in concert/alignment with federally supported data standards for payload.
- *Adhere to specifications/standards in ONC's IFR*
  - *SOAP and/or REST for transport*
    - The question was raised whether to support one or the other exclusively, or to support both with a possible service to translate between the two approaches. The requirements of California state government agencies will be important to consider here.
  - *Assurance of no tampering in transit*
    - This requirement was recognized as being non-trivial. Few if any commercial products currently offer this functionality, although the assumption is that vendors will move in this direction. There may be a significant cost burden placed on providers to upgrade their systems in order to meet this requirement. The question was raised about whether there might be some way for the

statewide infrastructure to provide a service that offers this functionality in the event that a communicant's information system is unable to do so. Further clarification is needed.

- o *Cross-enterprise authentication*
    - ▪ The Access Control and Implementation Task Group within CalPSAB is examining this issue.
    - ▪ It will be important for the state to specify the standards/methodology used in order to ensure that authentication across enterprises is properly supported.
    - ▪ Work in this area will need to be aligned with federal standards/approaches.

Design Principles (Slide 5):

Walter elucidated several principles guiding the design of the statewide technical architecture. Discussion points were raised in connection with the following principles:

- *Facilitate HIE where existing HIE resources are lacking or inadequate*
    - o *Statewide HIE services should help meaningful use-eligible providers to achieve HIE when no other HIE resources are available or they choose not to use other available HIE resources.*
        - ▪ Some participants felt that the clause "or they choose not to use other available HIE resources" is awkward and merits additional thought. At issue is how to ensure that appropriate and affordable HIE services are made available to all providers, while avoiding unwelcome competition between statewide HIE services and other available services offered by stakeholders. The group felt that this issue would be appropriate to refer to TAC and other policy-making bodies. Nevertheless, there was general agreement that the architecture should support this principle from a technical standpoint.
- *Use of any statewide HIE service is available to any healthcare stakeholder, subject to operating rules and fee requirements of the service, if any.*
    - o Dave Minch pointed out that there were also significant technical requirements that a provider would need to meet (either directly, or through a third party such as an HIO or vendor) in order to use the infrastructure. The principle was edited to read, "…subject to the technology requirements, operating rules and fee requirements of the service…."
- *Use of core statewide HIE services is mandatory if using any statewide HIE services.*
    - o Dave Minch and Dave Handren disagreed with this principle as written. Rim Cothren suggested that the validity of the principle depends upon what exactly is meant by "core services," and that this would need to be carefully defined if the principle was adopted. Dave Minch agreed with this, provided that the other services were dependent upon core services. Several participants then questioned whether this principle was necessary as it is implied that one would need to use services upon which other services depended.

Additional discussion was deferred to the email list due to time constraints. Participants were encouraged to review the rest of the meeting slides (including the remaining design principles and technical details of core services) and to send comments via the discussion list.

Next Steps:
- Group members will review the slide presentation, which represents the straw man architecture in early draft form, and provide comments.
- Dave Minch and Rim Cothren will create a roadmap to orient/guide the group through the rest of the technical design process.
- The next meeting is scheduled for 1/13 11am-12:30pm.

Summary of Key Questions/Issues/Decision Points:
- It was agreed that the appointment of co-chairs will be beneficial to the group's work.
- The group's decision-making will continue to follow a consensus-based model.
- The successful functioning of the statewide trust framework will require a DURSA or other compatible legal/policy structure; this requirement needs to be communicated to the appropriate work group(s).
- Data standards specified for payload should be aligned with federally supported standards.
- Should the architecture support SOAP, REST, or both? Should a translation service between the two be offered?
- Can the architecture offer a service that provides assurance of no tampering of data exchanged between communicants?
- How can we ensure that appropriate and affordable HIE services are made available to all providers, while avoiding unwelcome competition between statewide HIE services and other available services offered by stakeholders?
- Is it necessary to adopt a principle requiring the use of core services to access other statewide HIE services?

Members Present

Name	Organization
Paul Collins	CA Dept. of Public Health
Robert("Rim") Cothren	Cognosante, Inc.
Jeff Evoy	Sharp Community Medical Group
Jonah Frohlich	California Health and Human Services Agency
Dave Handren	Long Beach Network for Health
Daniel Haun	Adventist
Jen Herda	Long Beach Network for Health
Kathryn Lowell	CA Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
Dave Minch	John Muir Health System
Eileen Moscaritolo	CalOptima
Steve Saunders	LA County Dept. of Health Services
Jim Thornton	MemorialCare
Kris Young	CA Office of Health Information Integrity

Staff Present

Name
Walter Sujansky
Tim Andrews
Peter Hung